THE CASE OF John Nelson.

Written by HIMSELF.

The Lion hath roared, who will not fear? the LORD *hath spoken, who can but prophesy?*

Amos iii. 8.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

THE CASE OF JOHN NELSON.

MAY 4. 1744. At 7 at Night, when I had done my Day's Work, I went to *Adwalton*, and expounded at *John Booth*'s, to a well-behaved Congregation: When I had done, *John Gibſon*, the Conſtable's Deputy (an Alehouſekeeper, who had found *his Craft was in Danger*) preſſed me for a Soldier. I aſked him by whoſe Order? He ſaid, "ſeveral of the Inhabitants of their Town, who did "not like ſo much preaching:" And by his own Talk it appear'd, they were thoſe of his own Craft.

He cauſed me to go to the *White Hart*, whither Mr. *Charleſworth*, and Mr. *Holmes* of *Sikehouſe*, and ſeveral more went with us: And Mr. *Charleſworth* offer'd 500 *l.* Bail for me till the next Day. But no Bail was to be taken for a *Methodiſt* (ſo called;) he proteſted I ſhould go to his Houſe. I made no Reſiſtance, but went, and ſeveral of our People with us; and we ſang an Hymn, and prayed together, and ſo parted.

Next Morning ſeveral People came to ſee me before we went from *Adwalton*. Here I was kept ten Hours, before the Warrant came into his Houſe: And when the Conſtable came, he ſaid, if He had been there, he would have prevented what *Gibſon* had done.

Between 8 and 9 I went to *Birſtal*, to my Houſe, and after I had changed my Cloaths, we ſet out for *Halliſax*, and I was brought before the Commiſſioners, who ſmiled one at another as ſoon as they ſaw me. They bid the Doorkeepers not to let any Man come in; but Mr. *Thomas Brooke* had got in with me; and they ſaid, That is one of his Converts. Then they called *John Gibſon*, and aſked, How many Men have you brought? He ſaid, One. Well, and what have you againſt him? Why, Gentlemen, ſaid he, I have nothing to ſay againſt him but *He preaches to the People*; and ſome of our Townſmen don't like ſo much preaching. They broke out into Laughter, and one of them *ſwore* I was fit to go for a Soldier, for there I might have preaching enough. I ſaid to him, Sir, you ought not to ſwear; *Well*, ſaid they to me, *you have no Licence to preach, and you ſhall go for a Soldier*; and to the Captain, *Captain is he fit for you?* Yes, he anſwerd; *then take him away!*

But, I ſaid, here are ſeveral of my honeſt Neighbours, you ought to give me the Liberty of another Man, and hear what they ſay of me, whether I am ſuch an one as the Warrant mentions, or no. They anſwered, *Here is your Miniſter* [one of the Commiſſioners] *and he has told us of your Character*, and *we will hear no more*. So I found I was condemned before the Commiſſioners ſaw me.

Then Mr. *Brooke* laid the Petitions before them, ſent by my neighbouring Gentlemen, which teſtified I had done no Evil, but had behaved myſelf well in my Neighbourhood, and had always maintained my Family very well; and they deſired them to ſet me at Liberty. And Mr. *Brooke* ſaid, "Gentlemen, you ſee "he is not ſuch a Man as is mentioned in the War-"rant." But they bid him hold his Peace, and ſaid, "you are one of his Pupils, and you ought to go with "him." He anſwered, "Why do you not ſend me "then, for you have as much Right to ſend me as "him."

Then

Then our Miniſter ſpoke and ſaid, *Young* Brookes *lives with a Woman of the worſt Character of any in our Town.* When I heard him ſpeak againſt his Neighbours ſuch notorious Falſhoods as theſe, I thought it would be to no Purpoſe for Mr. *Brooke* to ſay any more, ſo I deſired him to be ſilent. Then they read the Papers ſent on my Behalf; and one of the Company aſked if he muſt put them on the File; but the Anſwer to him by ſeveral was, *No; for if they be call'd for, they will make againſt us.*

"So, ſaid I, Gentlemen, I ſee there is neither "Law nor Juſtice for a Man that is call'd a *Metho-* "*diſt*; but all is lawful that is done againſt me. I pray "GOD forgive you, for you know not what you do." They anſwered, *Surely your Miniſter muſt be a better Judge of you than any other Man, and he has told us enough of you and your preaching.* "Well, ſaid I, "Mr. *C*——, what do you know of me that is evil? "Whom have I defrauded, or where have I con- "tracted a Debt that I cannot pay?" He ſaid, *You have no viſible Way of getting your Living.*" I anſwered, "I am as able to get my Living with my "Hands, as any Man of my Trade in *England* is, "*and you know it:* And had I not been at Work "Yeſterday, and all the Week before?" But they bid the Captain take me away; and he came and ſaid, *We will take you off Preaching ſoon.* I anſwer'd "You muſt firſt aſk my Maſter leave." *But we will make you give over.* But, I replied, "It is out of "your Power." Then he thruſt me into a Corner of the Room, and ſaid, I ſhould have Company preſently.

Afterwards ſeveral were brought to the Commiſſioners, and three condemned to go with me, and 4 or 5 acquitted. But all had their Neighbours to ſpeak for them, except me; for what Need was there of any other Witneſs?

Glory be to GOD on high! He kept my Soul all this Time in perfect Peace, and I could ſay to him from my Heart,

Whilſt Thou, O my LORD, art nigh,
My Soul diſdains to fear;
Sin and Satan I defy
Still impotently near:
Earth and Hell their Wars may wage,
Calm I mark their vain Deſign,
Smile to ſee them idly rage
Againſt a Child of Thine. Rev.d Ch. Wesley

Then the Captain read the Articles of War to us that were condemned, and ſaid, *You hear your Doom is Death, if you diſobey us.* I anſwered, "I do not fear the Man that can kill me, any more than I do him that can cut down a Dogſtander. For I know my Life is hid with Chriſt in GOD; and He will judge between me and you one Day; but I beſeech him not to lay this Sin to your Charge." And to Mr. *C*——, I ſaid, "Sir, I pray GOD forgive you; "for you have given me ſuch a Character, as not an- "other Man in *England* will that knows me."

I was greatly ſurprized to ſee Men ſit on the Judgment Seat, and drink and ſwear as they did. And a Man who had a Commiſſion from GOD to reprove all that do ſuch Things, could hear and ſee, and yet never ſpeak in GOD's Cauſe. It made me cry out to the LORD, "Take the Matter into thy Hand, O "GOD, for Righteouſneſs is fallen in the Streets, "and Iniquity bears Rule." But I could not hear them ſwear but I muſt ſpeak to them, although they mocked at my Reproof.

Then we were guarded to *Halliſax* Goal; but the Keeper would not let us come into his Goal;) then to the Officer's Quarters, and kept till 6 at Night, were *John Rhodes*, and *Thomas Charleſworth* of *Little Gummerſel* came to ſee me, and cared for my Soul, as if they had been my Mother's Sons. O my GOD, remember them for Good, and give them, and their Houſes, and all that wiſh well to our *Sion*, to rejoice in the Gladneſs of thy People!

At

At 6 we ſet out for *Bradford*; and many of the Inhabitants of *Halliſax* prayed for me, and wept to ſee me in the Hands of unrighteous and cruel Men. But I ſaid, "Fear not, GOD hath his Way in the Whirl-"wind; and he will plead my Cauſe. Only pray "for me, that my Faith fail not."

When we were about half Way between *Halliſax* and *Bradford*, one of the Soldiers ſaid to me, "Sir, I am ſorry for you; for the Captain *is ordered* to put you in the Dungeon. But I will ſpeak to him, and if he will let me have the Care of you, you ſhall lay with me; for the Dungeon is a loathſome Place as ever I ſaw." I thanked him for his Offer; but when we got to *Bradford* we were driven up in the Street where the Croſs did ſtand; and the Captain ſent and fetched the Keeper of the Dungeon, and ſaid, *Take this Man, and put him into the Dungeon; and take this other along with you* —— (a poor harmleſs Man, all the Cloaths upon whoſe Back were not worth one Shilling, neither did they lay any Thing to his Charge when he was ordered for a Soldier.)

But when they came to the Dungeon-Door, the Soldier who ſpoke to me by the Way, went to the Captain, and ſaid, Sir, if you will give me Charge over Mr. *Nelſon*, my Life for his, he ſhall be forthcoming in the Morning. But the Captain threatned to break his Head, if he ſpoke about me any more.

He came to us before I went down, and I aſked him, "Sir, what have I done that I muſt go to the "Dungeon? If you are afraid of me that I ſhould run "away, ſet a Guard over me in a Room, and I will "pay them." He anſwered, "*My Order is*, to put "*you* in the Dungeon." So I ſee my LORD's Word is fulfilled. *The Servant is not above his Maſter*. For thoſe that were accuſed of Thieving and great Evils which they had done in their Neighbourhood, muſt eat and drink and lay on Featherbeds; but I only deſired a little Water, and it was refuſed me by the Captain, altho' I had nothing all Day, except a little Tea in the Morning. But my Maſter never ſends his

Servants

Servants a Warfare at their own Charge. He gives Strength according to our Day. For when I came into the Dungeon, that ſtunk worſe than any Hogſty or little Houſe, by reaſon of the Blood and Filth which ſinks from the Butchers who kill over it, my Soul was ſo filled with the LOVE of GOD, that it was as a Paradiſe to me.

✝ Then could I cry out, O the glorious Liberty of the Children of GOD! And I fell down on my Knees, and gave GOD Thanks that he counted me worthy to be put in a Dungeon for the Truth Sake; and prayed that my Enemies might be ſaved from the Wrath to come, I think with as much Deſire as I could feel for my own Mother's Children. I wiſhed they were as happy in their Houſes, as I was in the Dungeon.

About Ten, ſeveral of the People came to the Dungeon-door, and brought me ſome Candles, and put me ſome Meat and Water in at the Hole of the Door. When I had eat and drank, I gave GOD Thanks, and we ſung Hymns almoſt all Night, they without and I within.

The ſame Night, a Man that lives in *Bradford* came to the Dungeon, and though he was an Enemy to the *Methodiſts*, ſo called, when he ſmelt the ill Savour of the Place, he ſaid, "Humanity moves me;" and went away directly, and about Eleven, came again and ſaid, "I will aſſure you I am not in your Way of Thinking, but for all that, I have been with your Captain, and offered ten Pounds Bail for you, and myſelf as a Priſoner, if he would let you lie in a Bed, but all in vain: For I can get nothing of him but bad Words. If the Juſtice was in Town, I would have gone to him, and would have ſoon fetched you out. But ſince it is as it is, I pray GOD plead your Cauſe." O my GOD, let not him that would give a Cup of cold Water to thy Servants loſe his Reward: But do thou bleſs him, and bleſs thy People; and I beſeech thee to have Mercy on our Enemies, and let not thy heavy Judgments fall upon them; but be Thou glorified in their Converſion, not in their Deſtruction.

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The poor Man that was with me might have ſtarved, if my Friends had not brought him Meat: For when they had locked us up, they went to their Lodgings, and took no more Thought of us that Night.

When the Man and I were laid down upon a little ſtinking Straw, "Pray you, Sir, (ſaid he) are all theſe your Kinsfolk that they love you ſo well? I think they are the lovingeſt People that ever I ſaw in my Life." I anſwered, By this you may know that they are JESUS CHRIST's Diſciples; for this is the Mark He Himſelf has given whereby all Men might know his Diſciples, from the unbelieving World.

At Four in the Morning, my Wife and ſeveral more came to the Dungeon, and ſpoke to me through the Hole of the Door, and I ſaid, *Jeremiah*'s Lot is fallen on me. Then it came to my Remembrance that when I was about thirteen or fourteen Years old, I often thought if GOD would make me like *Jeremiah*, to ſtand and ſpeak his Words to the People in the Streets, as he did, I ſhould not mind who caſt Dirt at me. And now I am in ſome Meaſure treated as he was, for perſuading Men to flee from the Wrath to come.

My Wife ſaid, "Fear not; the Cauſe is GOD's for which you are here, and He will plead it Himſelf. Therefore be not concerned about me and the Children, for he that feeds the young Ravens will be mindful of us. He will give you Strength for your Day: And after we have ſuffered a while, he will perfect that which is lacking in our Souls, and then bring us where the Wicked ceaſe from troubling, where the Weary are at Reſt."

So ſaid they all that were with her at the Door. I told them, "I cannot fear either Man or Devil, ſo long as I find the Love of GOD as I do now: For he has cheared my Heart as with ſweet Wine, ever ſince he ſuffered me to be caſt into Priſon. O that I may be faithful unto Death, and I ſhall receive the Crown of Life! For not one Word of JESUS ſhall fall to the Ground till all be accompliſhed."

About

About Five in the Morning, they took me out, and we were guarded to *Leeds*, and ſtood in the Street till Ten. Hundreds flocked to ſee me. Some ſaid, "It is Shame to ſend a Man for a Soldier for ſpeaking the Truth; for many of our Neighbours that follow the *Methodiſts*, and were as wicked before as any People in the Town, are now like new Creatures; for we don't hear an ill Word come out of their Mouths." Others cried, "I wiſh they were all hanged out of the Way, for they make People go mad; and one cannot get drunk nor ſwear, but every Fool muſt correct us, as if we were to be taught by them. But I hope they will now be brougth to Nought, for that is one of the worſt of them."

Juſt as the Church began, I was guarded to the Goal, and the others ordered to the Alehouſe. The Goal-keeper here was very civil, for he let my Friends come in ſeveral Times to ſee me. I thought of the *Pilgrim*'s *Progreſs*; for Hundreds of People in the Streets ſtood, and looked at me thro' the Iron-grate, and were ready to fight about me. Several would have given Bail for me, if they would let me out, but I was told that an hundred Pound was refuſed, which was offered by a Stranger for me. I am too notorious a Criminal to be allowed ſuch Favours; for Chriſtianity is a Crime which the World can never forgive.

At Night I believe an Hundred of our Friends were with me in the Goal together. We ſung an Hymn, and prayed, and gave an Exhortation, and ſo parted. But Mr. *H.* was not willing I ſhould lie on ſtinking Straw, and ſent me a Bed to lie on. I find the Time is not yet come for me to de hated of all Men for CHRIST's Sake. I pray GOD give me Strength in that Day! Glory be to his holy Name, hitherto his Grace is ſufficient for me, and I hang upon his Promiſe for Strength in my next Trials.

At 5 on Monday Morning I was let out of Goal, and we marched off for *York* directly; many of our Friends went with us out of the Town near 3 Miles; but

but when I came to take my Leave, they mourned as one that had loſt his Firſt-born. I ſpake comfortable Words to them, and bad them "Stand faſt, in nothing terrified by your Adverſaries, which is to them an evident Token of Perdition, but to you of Salvation, and that of GOD. So the Peace of GOD be with you all."

We came to *York* by 3, and were brought before ſeveral of the Officers at the *Black Swan* in *Coney-Street*, who ſeemed to rejoice as Men that had taken great Spoil, and ſaluted me with many a grievous Oath. It brought ſomething to my Mind which I had ſpoken in the Fields to the LORD, when He had broke a great Cloud that was on my Soul, through my refuſing to preach when many deſired me, and I had Time, but conſulted with Fleſh and Blood. My Soul was in great Diſtreſs, ſo that I threw myſelf on the Ground, and requeſted for Death, ſeeing it more agreeable to Fleſh and Blood to be a Shepherd's Dog than a Preacher of the Goſpel; for his Hand is againſt every Man, and every Man's Hand is againſt him. But at the Remembrance of the Prophets and Apoſtles, and CHRIST himſelf, what Contradiction and Tribulation they all met with, the Cloud broke, and my Soul was ſo refreſhed with the Love of GOD, that I cried out "My Lord and my GOD! now thou haſt given me Strength forſake me not, and if thou ſend me to Hell to preach to Devils, I am ready to go."

When I was before theſe Officers, and heard ſuch horrid Language; I thought Hell could not be much worſe than the Company I was in. I aſked them, Do you believe there is one GOD, and that He is a GOD of Truth? They ſaid, *We do*. I anſwered, I cannot believe you, I tell you plainly. *Why ſo?* I replied, I cannot think that any Man of common Underſtanding, who believes that GOD is true, dares take his Name in vain; much leſs do you believe GOD can hear you, when you pray him *to damn your Souls*. Now ſuppoſe GOD ſhould grant you the Damnation you pray for, what miſerable Wretches would you be? Do you know that you muſt one Day appear before

that

that GOD, who will not hold him guiltleſs that taketh his Name in vain?

As I reaſoned with them about a future State, they ſeemed to ſhrink as if I had thrown Fire at them; but they ſoon put away the Conviction, and ſaid, "You muſt not preach here, for you are deliver'd to us for a Soldier; and muſt not talk ſo to us that are Officers." I anſwer'd, there is but one Way for you to prevent me. They ſaid, *What is that?* I replied, "It is, to ſwear no more in my Hearing."

Then we were guarded through the City; but it was as if Hell was moved from beneath to meet me at my coming. The Streets and Windows were filled with People who ſhouted and huzza'd as if I had been one that had laid waſte the Nation. But the LORD made my Brow like Braſs, ſo that I could look on them as Graſshoppers, and paſs'd thro' the City, as if there had been none in it, but GOD and me. O that I may never offend my gracious GOD, or provoke him to take his Loving-kindneſs from me! Then, though I go through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, I will fear no Evil. Even now I find his Word fulfilled, where he ſaith, I will deliver thee from ſudden Fear, and from Terror, for it ſhall not come near thee. Verily Thou art a GOD of Truth! O be merciful to this great City, whoſe Streets ring with Curſes; and turn upon them a pure Language, that their Souls may be ſaved, and the Enemy diſappointed of his Hope!

I was brought to the Guard-houſe, and the Officers caſt Lots for me, and it was Captain *S*——'s Lot to have me. Then they offered me Money, but I refuſed to take it; and they bid the Serjeant handcuff me and ſend me to Priſon. I was guarded thither by a File of Musketteers, but not handcuffed, and kept two Nights and Part of three Days; during which Time I was beſet with ſuch Curſers and Swearers as could hardly be matched out of Hell. So I had Work enough both Day and Night, to reprove them. I found they could not ſtand my Words, but the moſt harden'd among them ſhrunk, and wiſhed, they could leave it off, and never ſwear more.

Several

Several of the Towns-people came and aſked me of the Doctrine that the *Methodiſts* preached, which makes their Names, they ſaid, to be loathed by all Sects and Parties in the Nation. My Anſwer was, That ſame Doctrine it is, which made *Jews* and *Gentiles* conſpire again JESUS CHRIST, who firſt preached it: And whoſoever he be that bears the ſame Teſtimony, he muſt meet with the ſame Treatment. Our LORD hath ſaid, Ye ſhall be hated of all Men for my Sake. And again, If they have perſecuted me they will alſo perſecute you. What! do you think CHRIST would be found a Liar, and all his Apoſtles, who told us of the Things that are done in this our Day? Nay verily; Heaven and Earth ſhall paſs away, but not one Word of CHRIST's ſhall fall to the Ground.

When I had open'd the Scriptures, and told them the fundamental Points of our Doctrine, they ſaid one to another, This People is not what the World repreſents them; for if this is their Doctrine, there is not a Man in *England* can contradict them. They offered me ſtrong Drink (but I told them I did not chuſe it) wiſhed me out of my Enemies Hands, and left me to my Company of Drunkards and Swearers.

I may ſay, I have fought with Beaſts at *York*, for ſo theſe Men live; yet my ſpeaking to them was not in vain, for they did bridle their Tongues in my Preſence, after the firſt 24 Hours. When they did ſpeak any blaſphemous Word, if I did but turn, and look them in the Face, they looked like Criminals before the Magiſtrate.

On *Tueſday* Night, my Wife and Siſter *Mitchel* came to ſee me, and found me lying on the Boards. I ſaid, Behold the Fruits of the Goſpel! Now you ſee the Word of GOD is fulfilled, *They lay a Snare for him that reproveth in the Gate, and he that turneth from Evil maketh himſelf a Prey*. But GOD looks down from Heaven, and will plead our Cauſe; fear not. No, they anſwered, We do not fear; for our GOD is as able to deliver now, as he was 1700 Years ago. So they took their Leave of me that Night, and wiſhed me a good Repoſe on my wooden Bed: and, Thanks

be to GOD, I ſlept as well as if I had been on a Bed of Down.

Next Morning they brought me ſomething to eat, and bad me be ſtrong in the LORD, and not fear them that can kill the Body only. My Heart was rejoiced to ſee them ſo ſtedfaſt in the Faith.

This Day a Court-martial was held, and I was guarded to it by a File of Musketteers, with their Bayonets fix'd to their Pieces. When I came before the Court, they aſked what is this Man's Crime? And the Anſwer was, This is the *Methodiſt* Preacher, and he refuſes to take Money. Then they turned to me, and ſaid, "Sir, you need not find Fault with us, for we muſt obey our Orders, which are to make you act as a Soldier, for as ſuch you are delivered to us; and if you have not Juſtice done you, we cannot help it."

My Anſwer was, "I ſhall not fight; for I cannot bow my Knee before the LORD to pray for a Man, and get up and kill him when I have done. For I know GOD both hears me ſpeak and ſees me act, and I ſhould expect the Portion of the Hypocrite, if my Actions contradicted my Prayers." Well, don't ſtand preaching to us, ſaid they, for we muſt make you obey us; Serjeant, give him ſome Money; he offer'd me 2*s.* but I refuſed to take it. They threatned me ſore, but I could not fear them at all. Well, ſaid they, if you run away, you are as liable to ſuffer as if you had taken our Money. I anſwered, if I cannot be diſcharged lawfully, I ſhall not run away: If I do, puniſh me as you pleaſe. Then they ordered the Serjeant to go to Quarters with me. He carried me to the *Wild Man* in *Peter-gate*, and the People behaved well to me, though they had 8 more quartered upon them. They ſaid, It is a Pity you ſhould come among ſuch a wicked Crew as theſe we have. Surely there are but few like them in the World. They ordered me a Room and Bed to myſelf. Bleſſed be GOD, who gives me Favour in the Sight of the *Egyptians*, who have been ſo uſed by thoſe of our own Church. Theſe People were profeſſed *Papiſts*, who, I might imagine, would ſhew no more Mercy

to

to a Man that preaches Salvation by Faith, than they would to a mad Dog. But I ſee it is not the Name that makes the Chriſtian, but the Mind that was in CHRIST; and whoſoever hath this Mind in him, he is a Chriſtian, let the World call him what they will.

I came to *Margaret-town*'s End, and met with my Wife and Siſter *Mitchel*, who rejoiced to ſee my Feet once more out of Priſon. We ſang Praiſes to GOD for his great Mercies to me at this Time, and paſſed the Afternoon in incouraging each other. Next Morning I ſet them out of Town, and went, as I was ordered, to parade at the *Blue Boar* in *Caſtle Gate*. The Officers ordered Corporal *W*—— to fetch me a Gun, and other warlike Inſtruments. He ſeemed to ſhudder at the Taſk, but was forced to obey; and when he brought them, and came to gird them on me, he trembled as if he had had the Palſy.

I aſked why they girt me with theſe warlike Habiliments, for I am a Man averſe from War, and ſhall not fight but under the Prince of Peace, the Captain of my Salvation; and the Weapons he gives me are not carnal like theſe. Well, ſaid they, but you muſt bear theſe, till you can get your Diſcharge. As you put them on me, I anſwered, I will bear them as a Croſs, and uſe them as far as I can without defiling my Conſcience, for that I will not do for any Man on Earth.

The Officers bad them march us off to *Hewcarth-Moor*, to learn the Exerciſe of a Soldier; but Corporal *W*—— ſeemed as tender of me as if he had been my own Father, and carried the Gun for me to the Field. But when he came to teach me their Exerciſe, his Heart ſeemed to fail him, and he bid me lay down the Gun, and we fell into Diſcourſe. I found he had the Fear of GOD before his Eyes, and the LORD had ſhewed him the Light of his Countenance. But he was as a Sparrow alone on the Houſe-top, none cared for his Converſation, but they all deſpiſed him, becauſe he would not get drunk and ſwear as they did. O my GOD remember him for Good always, I beſeech Thee.

Next Day I was ordered to the Field, and others

muſt teach me the warlike Exerciſe, who all behaved civily to me. I had more to ſee me than all the reſt, and it cauſed the Truth to break out the more, and removed Prejudice from many. I found the People of *York* looked upon One that is called a *Methodiſt*, as One that has the Plague, and infects all he comes near, and they bleſſed GOD that none had come to preach there.

But if I was bound, the Word of GOD was not bound; for if any did blaſpheme, I reproved them, whether rich or poor, and fell into many Diſputes with them, and GOD gave me Words, ſuch as they could not reſiſt. My Diſcourſes had ſuch an Effect on them, that they ſaid they wiſhed Mr. *Weſley* would come and preach there. I gave them ſeveral of our little Books, ſo by hearing and reading they found out our Doctrine to be only the plain Word of GOD. And now ſeveral attended my coming to Field, not to ſee me as before, but to aſk Queſtions, and to know of the New Doctrine, as ſome were pleaſed to call it. Surely by all theſe Things ſhall the Goſpel be ſpread. The LORD is in the Tempeſt, and it ſhall turn to his Glory, Satan doth but whet a Knife to cut his own Throat.

On *Sunday* the 13th I went to *Coney-ſtreet* Church, and my LORD manifeſted himſelf to me in great Love at the Sacrament. At Night, *Hannah Scolefield* and I, and our Brother from *Mancheſter*, with two or three more, went out into the Fields, thinking to retire. But ſome had ſeen us, and told others that we were gone to ſing Hymns. We had been but a few Minutes together before we had near an hundred to keep us Company. We ſung two Hymns, and I gave them an Exhortation. They received my Words with Meekneſs, and wiſhed to hear me again.

We went about a Mile another way, but there were People walking there alſo, who knew me, and flocked to us, and deſired to hear what Sort of Doctrine it is we preach, which cauſes all Men to hate us. I ſaid, It is the Doctrine of JESUS CHRIST which made all Men hate him; and ye are ſenſible

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our great Shepherd ſaid, Ye ſhall be hated of all Men for my Sake. But, they ſaid, this is a Chriſtian Land, and it is not ſo now. Well, ſaid I, then you muſt ſay the Goſpel is not an everlaſting Goſpel, or you declare us bleſt, and almoſt all the Preachers in *England* curſt. They ſaid, What, do we point the Bleſſings to you, and the Curſe to all the reſt? We think it the other Way. Then (ſaid I) you do not think as CHRIST ſpake, for he ſaid, *Bleſſed are ye, when all Men ſpeak Evil of you, and hate you for my ſake and the Goſpels: Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for ſo they did to the Prophets of old. But woe unto you, when all Men ſpeak well of you, for ſo they ſpake of the falſe Prophets.* Upon this they were ſilent, but wiſhed they could hear me themſelves, then they could judge better. By this Time a great Company was come together, deſiring to hear me, and GOD gave me to ſpeak plain, and to their Hearts. When I had done, ſeveral of them ſaid, they would go ten Miles to hear ſuch another Diſcourſe. The Prejudice ſeemed taken out of their Minds at a Stroke; and, They cried this is the Doctrine which ought to be preached, let Men ſay what they will againſt it.

As we came back, one of our Company ſaid, I wonder the Devil cannot perceive, that his Striving to ſuppreſs the Goſpel, is like ſtriving to quench the Fire by caſting Oil into it. As GOD ſpake, ſo it is, I ſee this Day. His Servants are like Brands of Fire caſt into dry Stubble. Surely GOD will be glorified in your Captivity. Only let us watch and pray that the Enemy get no Advantage over us.

The Day following I went as before, to exerciſe, and many came to talk with me, ſome to diſpute, and ſome who earneſtly deſired to be ſaved. Among the Diſputers was a Clergyman. I knew him, for I had ſeen him in his Gown three Days before. When ſeveral who appeared as Gentlemen, diſputed hotly againſt all the Power of Religion. I ſhewed them from the Articles, and Homilies, and Prayers of our own Church, that thoſe who ſpoke as they did, were no Members of the Church of *England*. For to be a real Member of CHRIST's Church, is to feel CHRIST in us; to know He died for his Church, and that by his

Death

Death we are delivered from Death eternal; to find that Spirit which raiſed Him from the Dead, raiſing us from the Death of Sin, that our Bodies may be the undefiled Temple of the Living GOD, an holy Habitation of GOD through his Spirit dwelling in us. For as many as have the Spirit of GOD, they are the Sons of GOD; and if any Man have not the Spirit of CHRIST, he is none of his. Nay, if you know not (I added) that CHRIST is in you, you are now in a State of Reprobation. So, ſaid they, you have condemned us all at a Stroke. I anſwered, I have condemned no Man, for I have not ſpoken my own, but the Words of GOD, as I appeal to your Conſciences, you that have ever read them.

When they were put to Silence, the Miniſter began to explain the Spirit of GOD out of the World; as what could not be felt or perceived at all, neither was it neceſſary, now we had the Scriptures to go by. I ſaid, it is highly neceſſary, if the Scriptures be true, for they tell me, if I have not the Spirit of CHRIST, I am none of his; and if I am not his, I muſt belong to the Devil, for they two ſhare the World between them.

Beſides, if there be no ſuch Thing as receiving the Holy Ghoſt now a-days, as you ſay, then he who repeats the Prayers of the Church, offers to GOD the Sacrifice of Fools. Here he ſtormed at me, and called me an Enthuſiaſt, and ſaid, to talk of the Spirit was all a Deluſion. Hold, Sir, I replied, or I ſhall expoſe you before the People, which I did not deſign to do. How could you affirm, before GOD and the Congregation, that you was inwardly moved by the Holy Ghoſt to take upon you the Office of a Deacon, and now you teſtify that there is no ſuch Thing as being moved by the Holy Ghoſt? He ſaid, did I ſay ſo? Yes, Sir, I anſwered, you did, when you received Holy Orders. He turned pale, ſpake not ten Words more, but went away. I have met him ſeveral times ſince, and he ſpeaks kindly to me.

I had ſome every Day to diſpute with me; and every Night ſome to converſe with me, who wanted to know the Way to *Zion*. The People now cry out, When will Mr. *Weſley* come, for here are Thouſands

in this Town would gladly hear him. Indeed I find a great Deſire in them to know the Way of Salvation; nay, and they ſeem willing to be ſaved GOD's own Way, that is, *from* their Sins, not *in* them. Surely the LORD will be mindful of them, and give them Teachers after his own Heart.

The ſecond *Sunday* I went to Church, and my Heart was comforted again by the Love of GOD in the Sacrament. GOD, I find, will meet us in his own Ways; O may we never forſake them!

This Week I had ſeveral of the Brethren to ſee me, and we were comforted together. Our Brother *Aſh* brought me ſome little Books, which I gave to the People who came to talk with me. So that by my Speaking, and their Reading, many began to be alarmed, and ſent for me to their Houſes, to enquire how can theſe Things be, which we affirm? For if theſe Things are ſo as you ſay, and Mr. *Weſley* has here written, then we are not Chriſtians. I told them I would prove theſe Things to be true, both from our own Church, and from the written Word of GOD; and if you find you have not theſe inward Marks of Faith, ſuch as Peace, Joy, Love, the Witneſs of the Spirit, you are not Chriſtians yet. But that is no Reaſon why ye ſhould not become ſuch; for CHRIST has commanded Repentance and Remiſſion of Sins to be preached to every Soul in his Name; and he doth actually pardon and abſolve all them that truly repent, and unfeignedly believe his Holy Goſpel. Therefore ſeek, and you ſhall find, for the Truth of GOD binds Him to give to every one that aſketh.

The People attended my going to the Field all this Week, and when I went along the Streets, they came out of their Houſes to ſtare at me, as if I had been a Monſter. I have read that they would not ſuffer them to buy or ſell in the City, unleſs they had the Mark of the Beaſt; but here, without his Mark we cannot ſo much as paſs the Streets. O my GOD, why is thy Servant as a ſpeckled Bird in this which is *called* a Chriſtian Country? *Called* after thy moſt ſacred Name, which whoſoever names ſhould depart from Iniquity. How is the faithful City become

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an Harlot, and thy People taken Captive by the Enemy at his Will. It is Time for Thee, LORD, to lay to thy Hand, for they have deſtroyed thy Law!

One Day this Week, after my Exerciſe on the Moor, there came a Gentleman in Gold Lace, and a Miniſter in Diſguiſe, and began aſking me Queſtions, which I anſwered, according to the Ability GOD gave me. Many flock'd round about us to hear, for our Diſpute was long, and hot on their Side. I believe we had talked half an Hour, before I perceived he was a Miniſter; for I took him for a Lawyer, and ſuch a one as believed there was no GOD: For if I ſpoke of the Scriptures, he threw up his Head and called me Fool, and bad me hold my Nonſenſe. I ſaid, that which you call Nonſenſe, I call the higheſt Wiſdom. When I ſpake any thing of the Spirit of GOD, he heaved his Cane at me, as if he would have ſtruck me: But GOD gave me perfect Peace in my Soul, and Words that made him ſtart, and convinced the By-Standers of the Truth. He was ſo enraged that he foamed at the Mouth like any Horſe that is hard rid. But when I underſtood that he was a Miniſter, I ſaid, Hold, Sir, let *me* ſpeak a little by your Leave. You call yourſelf a Miniſter of the Church of *England*, do you not? *I do.* Pray then, Sir, what Doctrine do you preach? For you make the Word of GOD of none Effect, and you deny all Inſpiration. *So I do deny all Inſpiration.* "How "dare you then pray for the Inſpiration of GOD's "Spirit, when you do not believe there is any ſuch "Thing?" When he had raged a-while, he ſaid, I believe you have read the Book of *Job*, and made it all your own. I anſwered, I have need of Patience, who have Men of ſuch Principles as *you* to talk with, that regard not what they ſay to provoke one; but I thank GOD, you have not done it yet. He replied, his Reaſon for ſpeaking ſo, was, becauſe I could not be quiet with my Nonſenſe and Inſpiration. And, I hear, you have preached ſeveral Times ſince you came, and have filled the Heads of many in this Town with your New Doctrine. I told him I had not preached publickly ſince I came, but did not know how ſoon I might. Then he ſhook his Stick,

and ſtamp'd, and ſaid in Anger, "If you do preach publickly, we ſhall take an Order with you, which ſhall be worſe than ſending you for a Soldier." Let GOD look to that (I anſwered) for by his Grace I can love all Men, but fear none, that can kill the Body only. I aſſure you it is not the Fear of Man which will hinder me from preaching; for where the Spirit of the LORD is, there is Liberty. When he began to calm a little, I aſked him, Sir, ſuppoſe you had been inwardly moved by the Holy Ghoſt to preach the Goſpel; if the outward Ordination was refuſed you, when you believed yourſelf called according to the Will of CHRIST to preach, would you forbear preaching? that is, would you obey Man or GOD? I ſuppoſe, ſaid he, you think you have put an hard Queſtion to me. But hard or eaſy, he never anſwered it; and I cannot remember that ever I ſaw him ſince.

On *Saturday*, ſeveral deſired me to preach on *Sunday* Morning. I told them I ſhould take a Walk out to the Moor at half an Hour after Seven. Accordingly I did ſo, and found thrice as many as I expected, and preached to about three Hundred well behaved People, who begged me to preach again at Night. I anſwered ſome of them I did not know but I might; yet I gave no publick Notice. But one told another, and ſpread it through the City.

I went to the Miniſter, and heard the Biſhop preach, and received the bleſſed Sacrament at his Hands. At Seven in the Evening, I went to the Moor, and found an unexpected Congregation, I believe ſix thouſand People. But there was nothing prepared for me to ſtand on, and great Part of the Soldiers were there, almoſt drunk, and began to quarrel with the People that crowded me, ſo that I ſaw there was likely to be Miſchief done, and prevented it by withdrawing. If I had preached, I believe they would have behaved quietly, for they ſeemed to have a great Deſire to hear what this Doctrine is. I had not the Opportunity of ſatisfying them at this Time; but they that had heard in the Morning, told others, and inflamed them the more with Deſire

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to hear for themſelves. Several ſent for me to their Houſes, and others came to me: So I ſee GOD will work, and who ſhall hinder? LORD open their Underſtanding that they may know the Things which belong to their everlaſting Peace.

On *Monday* I heard that ſome Clergymen were with the Officers; and at Night one of the Officers ſent for me, and ſaid, What you cannot leave off your preaching yet; but we muſt be blamed about you. But if ever you preach publickly more, you ſhall be ſeverely whipped. My Anſwer was, I am not careful in this Matter. It is better to obey GOD than Man! I believe it is the Will of GOD that I ſhould preach; and I have not taken Man to pleaſe in any thing that will offend my GOD.

With many Threats he bad me go, but I made no Promiſe to obey him, neither did I intend it in this Caſe; for I had promiſed to go to *Ackam*, a Village about a Mile out of *York*, the next Evening. Accordingly I went, and preached to almoſt all the Inhabitants in a Field. The LORD gave me to ſpeak his Word freely, and ſent it with Power to their Hearts. The Rock was ſtruck, and the Waters guſhed out. All whom I ſaw behaved well. Many ſaid they hoped I would come again, "for let Men ſay what they will "of this People, this is the Truth, and ſo we ſhall "find it one Day."

As I came down the Street, an Alderman of *York* and his Wife, who had been to hear me, were ſtanding at the Gate of his Houſe, and he call'd to me, and ſaid, If you pleaſe to accept of a Glaſs of any Sort of Liquor my Houſe affords, it is at your Service. I ſaid, I thank you for your Good Will, but I don't care to drink. Several others offered me Drink, but I took none. They prayed me to come once a Week, as long as I ſtayed in *York*. LORD, be mindful of this People, I beſeech thee, and ſend them thoſe, who will preach Righteouſneſs by Faith in JESUS CHRIST. And O! that they may be found in the Wedding-garment in that Day, when every Covering, which is not of thy Spirit, will be found as filthy Rags before thy pure Eyes.

All

All this Week I had Company as much as I could tell what to do with. Several deſired me to preach on *Sunday* Morning. I did not promiſe, but went to diſcourſe with about a Score at 7 on the Moor. Others had a Suſpicion of my being there, and I believe 200 flocked round me, as ſoon as they ſaw me walking, and begged me to preach to them. I told them I ſtand in Jeopardy if I do; but they anſwered, we are in more Danger than you, for our Souls are in Danger. It came into my Mind, that I had freely received, and ought to give freely. Wherefore I preach'd to them, and GOD was with us of a Truth, and the Hearts of the People were opened to receive the Word in Love.

I came to Siſter *Townſhend*'s, and found my own Brother, and Brother *Mitchel* come to ſee me; and we were comforted together. Our Time was ſhort, for I had but half an Hour, before I went to anſwer what I had done. Somebody had told the Enſign that I had been preaching; and he ſent for me, and ſaid, *Damn your Blood, Sir, have you been preaching this Morning?* I ſaid, I had. He ſwore he would have no preaching nor praying in their Regiment. Then I ſaid, "Sir, you ought to have no Swearing nor Curſing neither; for ſurely I have as much Right to pray and preach, as you have to curſe and ſwear."

He ſwore again that I ſhould be damnably whipped for what I had done. I anſwered, "Let GOD look to that, for the Cauſe is his. But if you don't leave off your curſing and ſwearing, it will be worſe with you than with me." Then he ſaid, Corporal, put this Fellow in Priſon directly. The Corporal ſaid, "Sir, I muſt not carry a Man to Priſon, unleſs I give in his Crime with him." Well, ſaid he, it is for diſobeying Orders. So I ſee an hundred may diſobey all the Orders of GOD, and there is no Notice taken of them; nor do the common People cry out, hang *them* out of the Way: But if one of a thouſand begins to reprove them for Sin, they hale him to Priſon, as if he had killed Father or Mother. But ſo it was from the Beginning, for a Murtherer was preferred before the Prince of Life.

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I was put Priſoner juſt as the Church began, and I ſent a Man to tell my Brother that the Word of GOD was fulfilled, "*Behold the Devil ſhall caſt ſome of you* "*into Priſon, that ye may be tried,*" and deſired their Prayers that I may be faithful unto Death.—As ſoon as I was within the Priſon, my Heart was filled with Joy unſpeakable, and my Mouth with Praiſe to my dear Redeemer. This alſo ſhall turn to the Glory of GOD; for ſeveral Men of good Report heard me this Morning, and teſtified that I had ſpoke the Truth; and they would not (they ſaid) be guilty of ſending that Man to Priſon for preaching, not for all the World. This cauſed many to come to me, who offered me Wine and ſtrong Drink. I told them I did not care for any Sort of ſtrong Liquor; but ſuch as I had gave I unto them; ſome little Books, and the Words of GOD, which he gave me plentifully to ſpeak to them without Reſpect of any Man's Perſon.

Two Nights, and near three Days, I was kept Priſoner at this Time; during which my Soul was as a watered Garden, and I could ſing Praiſes to GOD all the Day long, for he turned my Captivity into Joy; and gave me to reſt as well on the Boards as if I had been on a Bed of Down. Now could I ſay GOD's Service is perfect Freedom, and I was carried out much in Prayer, that my Enemies might drink of the ſame River of Peace which my GOD gave ſo largely to me.

Now did I more plainly ſee the dreadful State of the Unconverted than ever before, and thought if it might be the Converſion of my Enemies, I could be content that they ſhould tread me under their Feet. But GOD only knows how it would have been, had I been ſo tried. Yet thus far he hath helped me, and given me Strength for my Day. Indeed I have found him a GOD of Truth as far as I have tried him, and I put forth the Hand of my Faith to lay hold of his Strength for what he ſhall next call me to.

On *Tueſday* I was fetched out, and brought before the Mayor. There were ſeveral of the young Officers with him, who ſmiled when I came into the Room;

Room; for they had been ſeveral times to ſee me in Priſon, and had ſwore I ſhould be ſeverely whipt. But I told them if they did not repent, and leave off that ſwearing, they ſhould periſh eternally (and I ſhall be a Witneſs againſt you) and that will be worſe than your whipping me for CHRIST's Sake.

Now they ſeemed to rejoice, as if their Words were going to be fulfilled. The Major called, "*John Nelſon*, what was you put Priſoner for?" For warning the People to flee from the Wrath to come, I anſwered, and if this be a Crime, I ſhall commit it again, unleſs you cut out my Tongue; for it is better for me to die than diſobey GOD. "Well, but if that be all, he replied, that is no Crime: For when you have done your Duty, I don't care if you preach every Night in an Houſe, or any private Place out of the Town: But I would not have you make any Mobs." That, ſaid I, is far from my Deſign. "Well, he ſaid, you may go home to your Quarters, and if I have a convenient Time, I will ſend for you, and hear you myſelf; for I wiſh all Men were like you." Here my Adverſaries hung down their Heads, and gave off ſmiling.

As I went to Siſter *Townſend*'s, I heard that we were to leave *York* on *Thurſday* at four in the Morning, and march to *Sunderland*. I had a great Deſire to have ſeen my Wife firſt; but ſhe did not get my Letter ſoon enough. Many of the People came, and ſaid, "We are ſorry you are going ſo ſoon from *York*; but if you get your Liberty, we hope both you and Mr. *Weſley* will come: For we have need of ſuch Plain-dealing, and Thouſands in the City would be glad to hear. You ſee what a populous wicked Place it is: Pray do not forget us, but think of us when you ſee us not. We expected ſome of you two or three Years ago, but you had no Regard for our Souls, 'till GOD brought you by Force. Surely you was not ſold hither, but ſent for our good; therefore forget us not."

O the Tenderneſs which this People ſhew'd, and deſire for the Word of GOD! It moved me to cry out, LORD, have Mercy on them, and let them hear thy Goſpel, and find it thy Power unto Salvation; for why ſhould thy People periſh for lack of Knowledge?

On *Thurſday* Morning we ſtood two Hours in the

Streets, before we ſet out of Town. We marched to *Eaſingwood* that Day, and when we were driven up in the Street, the People perceived me to be the *Methodiſt* Preacher they had read of in the Newspapers. They told one another, and flock'd about me, as if the Soldiers had bro't a Monſter into the Town.

When we had ſtayed near an Hour in the Street, I and five more were billeted at one Houſe, where the People were ſo poor, they had not ſix Seats for us to ſit on, nor any Beds; ſo we came back to the Officer's Quarters, and they ordered four of us to another Houſe.

GOD gave me to ſpeak plain to them, and ſeveral of their Neighbours, who came to ſee the *Methodiſt*. And they ſaid, if this be the *Methodiſt* Doctrine, we pray GOD we may have it preached in this Town; for hundreds would be glad to hear you.

In the Evening the Head Man of the Town came in. He is a profeſſed Papiſt, but a moral, honeſt Man, and one who bears a good Character in his Neighbourhood. He aſked me many Queſtions, and GOD gave me to anſwer him to his Satisfaction. Indeed I never ſaw a Man of his Rank ſo teachable and ſo humble. His Gold Lace did not make him above liſtening to the Goſpel. He ſeemed a Man of ſound Reaſon, as well as liberal Education. I ſpoke for near an Hour to prove the Doctrine of Juſtification by Faith; and that both from the Old and New Teſtament. I ſhewed the Fruits of that juſtifying Faith, and the Neceſſity of every Man's having it, that he may eſcape the Damnation of Hell. The Word had ſuch Effect upon him, that his Eyes diſcovered the Tenderneſs of his Heart; and when I had ended, he ſaid, I think no Man in his Senſes would dare to hinder you from inſtructing Sinners in the Way of Salvation. As for my Part, I ſhall be glad to ſee you at Liberty: And if you get clear of theſe Men, and come again this Way, I would have you call on me.

I was amazed to find ſuch a Man among the Papiſts, having met very few either Teachers or Hearers of our own Church, but what hold the Popiſh Principles ten times ſtronger than this Man, who calls himſelf a Papiſt.

Papiſt. When he went away, he forced two Shillings into my Hand, which I would have returned, telling him I received no Money, and needed none; but he would not take it again, ſaying he could afford it, and I might have Occaſion for it on my Journey. O GOD, be merciful to him that gives a Cup of cold Water to thy Servants!

Next Morning at Two, the Drum beat for us to march out of Town. By Eleven on *Friday* we got to *North-Alerton*, and by Twelve ſettled in Quarters. I went into the Market-Place, and ſpoke to thoſe I found there, of the Way of Salvation, I hope not in vain. Afterwards I was ſitting alone, and there came a Shopkeeper and ſaid, If I would go to his Houſe, he would give me a Glaſs of any Liquor I pleaſed to drink. I told him I did not drink any ſtrong Liquor. Well but he ſaid, I deſire your Company, if you pleaſe, for half an Hour. I went to his Houſe, and drank Tea with him and his Family, and ſpoke plain to them. They received my Exhortation with Thankfulneſs, and ſaid, We have heard much of you, but never heard any of you before. Several of you have paſſed through the Town, and we wondered they never preached here. If you come again, we hope you will call and ſee us. I gave them a Book, and returned to my Quarters.

Next Morning at One, the Drum beat for us to march, and we got to *Darlington* by Nine. Here I was known to ſeveral, and by them made known to almoſt all the Town. Many came to my Quarters to talk with me; and others ſent for me. Whence this Famine in our Land? I find the People hunger after the Word, as if there were no Bibles in the Nation.

We reſted here on *Sunday*, and I had many to ſee me. When they heard what our Doctrine was, they cried, It is a Shame to ſend a Man for a Soldier for ſpeaking the Truth; for let all Men ſay what they will, this is the Goſpel of JESUS CHRIST.

In the Evening one of the Officers came to me, and ſaid, "Well, Sir, why was not you at Church to-day?" I anſwered, "I was, Sir, and if *you* had been there, *you* might have ſeen me; for I never miſs going, when I have an Opportunity." Well, Sir, he added,

have you preached ſince you came hither? Not publickly yet, I replied. He ſwore he wiſhed I would, that he might puniſh me ſeverely. But, Sir, (I told him) if you do not repent, and leave off that Habit of Swearing, you will be worſe puniſhed than you are able to puniſh me. He ſaid, "I will make you mind your Firelock, and leave off your preaching." Yes, Sir, I anſwered, when I leave off ſpeaking.

This was he that put me in Priſon at *York* for preaching. As *Saul* hunted *David*, ſo has this Man hunted my Soul; but I truſt the ſame GOD that delivered *David* will deliver me from cruel Men.

I gave ſeveral Books away in this Town alſo, which we left the next Morning.

I was much ſurprized at the good Nature of the Soldiers in all this March, for I believe twenty offered to carry the Gun for me, and any thing elſe I had. GOD, I found, ſupported me wonderfully in all theſe Trials; for I could travel fifteen or twenty Miles faſting, as well as thoſe who eat and drink two or three Times by the Way. Surely Man doth not live by Bread alone; but the LORD is the Strength of *Iſrael*, the Defender of all them that put their Truſt in him! O GOD, be Thou my Guide unto Death!

We got to *Durham* by Nine on *Monday*; but in our Way to *Darlington*, we had a River to croſs, and were obliged to wade through it. The Day was very hot, ſo that I had ſweat much, and catched Cold immediately. I found myſelf much out of Order, when we got to *Durham*, and deſired I might lie down a little. Corporal *W*—— lay down with me, and fell aſleep. At Twelve I waked ſuddenly, as if ſome Man had called me, and ſaid to the Corporal, I muſt go to the Market-place directly, for what I know not, neither which Way to go to it. Nor I, he ſaid, but I will go with you, and we can enquire the Way. Accordingly we did; and juſt as we got thither, my Brother *Weſtal* was enquiring for me among the Soldiers. Well, ſaid Mr. *W*——, I did never ſee ſuch a Thing in all my Life, that you ſhould thus awake, and come to meet your Friend, the Minute he came to ſeek for you.

We were much comforted together. He told me that Mr. *John Wesley* would be at *Durham* soon after four o'Clock. I gave GOD Thanks for that News.— We went on to a Common about a Mile from the Town, and there we met Mr. *W*—. My Heart rejoiced to see him, and great Reason have I to give GOD Thanks that I ever saw him, who was an Instrument in GOD's Hands of plucking me as a Brand out of the Fire. And I have found him GOD's Messenger for my Good ever since.

We came to the Sign of the Angel, and had some Conversation together. He exhorted me to watch and pray, and did not doubt but my Captivity would turn to the Glory of GOD, and Furtherance of the Gospel. At six I went to answer my Call, and Mr. *W* ——— went in to the Minister.

Afterwards I, and *Thomas Beard* my Fellow-prisoner, met Mr. *W*—— and our Brother *Errington*, and went with them to the Inn, and stayed 'till nine. When we had prayed together, we commended each other to the Grace of GOD, and so parted in Body, not in Spirit.

Next Morning, the Drum beat at One, and we were called up into the Market-place, and caused to stand 'till Three, and then marched off for *Sunderland*, which we reached by Nine. When we were brought up in the Town, I heard several of the Inhabitants say to one another, that is the *Methodist* mentioned in the News-papers, for his Look is not like other Men's. O my GOD, why am I, and my Fellows become Men that are wondered at!

While we stood, a Landlord came to us, and said, Sir, I wish you would quarter at my House, for I expect two, and should be glad to have you for one, and whom you chuse for a Comrade. I chose Corporal *W*— and asked for the Billet as the Man desired, but could not get it. But I believe we got the best Quarters we could have in *Sunderland*. Thus I see, if we acknowledge GOD in all our Ways, he will direct our Paths.

When I went to exercise, I had many came to see me, and fell into Discourse with them, but could get no Hold of them, for they assented and consented to all I said; and were so full of what the World calls

good Manners, that all I ſpoke was as written on the Sand, tho' I talked with them ſeveral Days. Yet ſome, I truſt, will be mindful of their Everlaſting Welfare.

On *Saturday* Night, I was ordered to ſtand Centry on the *Sunday* following, and deſired I might ſtand another Day, or pay for my Guard. I believe ten Men offered to ſtand for me, but all in vain; for the Enſign was the Officer of the Guard that Day, and he proteſted he would make me do it myſelf. I aſked, Sir, what have I done, that I cannot have the ſame Liberty as another Man? He anſwered, "You love the Church too well, and I will keep you from it, and make them go who do not like to go." Keep me, O my GOD, from all Anger or Ill-will, for this Man is ſet to prove me. I went to the Guard-houſe, and many came to talk with me: But I did not ſtand Centry 'till Six on *Monday* Morning. The Enſign's Saying in the open Street, I ſhould not go to Church becauſe I loved it, drew many of the People to me; and will turn I am perſwaded, to the Furtherance of the Goſpel.

The Week after, Mr. *M* — came. He had heard what the Enſign had done, and came to me, and aſked me how I did, and ſaid, I am informed Mr. *A* —— hindred you from going to Church, but I will aſſure you you ſhall not be hindred again, as long as you are with us. —— I have found ſomething of Good in this Man ever ſince I knew him. He will hear Reaſon, and ſeems to make a Conſcience both of his Words and Actions.

I was near an Hour in his Chamber, and he aſked me of the principal Points of our Doctrine. I made them as plain to him as I could, and he heard me with great Candour, and ſaid he had no Fault at all to find with it. He told me, " the firſt Time that ever I ſaw you, I ſaw you was no Vagrant, but it would be a Scandal to all who were concerned in ſending or receiving ſuch an one: For the Act of Parliament does not reach ſuch as you. But the reſt of the Officers ſaid they could not help it, for you was delivered to us as a Soldier by the J——s, and they are the Rogues. No Sir, I anſwered, the J——s are in no Fault, for I was never before one of them yet. He ſaid who ſent you then? I replied, the Commiſſioners. What Evidence had they a-

gainſt you? The Accuſation againſt me was, *He preaches to the People*, by the Conſtable's Deputy, and he alſo confeſſed he knew no other Evil of me. Well, but the Act of Toleration clears you from that being a Crime. What, had you no Men to ſpeak for you? Yes, ſeveral were ready, but none were ſuffered to do it; neither were the Papers regarded which my honeſt Neighbours and Gentlemen ſent on my Behalf. For one of the Commiſſioners was the *Parſon of our* Pariſh, and *he was the Evidence againſt me*, and they ſaid they would hear no other. Well (ſaid Mr. *M*——) it is no Wonder they treated you ſo, if the Prieſt was concerned; for they have been at the Head of all the Perſecutions for Religion which have been ſince the World began. I ſee them ſo wicked, that I do not mind Religion at all. But this is my Religion: I believe there is one GOD, and that CHRIST his Son died for the World. And I ſtrive to do honeſtly to all Men, and to do a good Turn to the Meaneſt if I can. And I think my Religion is better than theirs who preach one Thing and do another. For I have ſeen ſo much of them, that I will aſſure you, I would hear you as ſoon as any in the Land.

He ſaid, he could like to read ſome of our Books, and I made him a Preſent of *An Earneſt Appeal*, and the *Character of a Methodiſt*, and the Sermon *Awake thou that ſleepeſt*. He has told me ſince, that he has read, and likes them well.

This Day he procured me a Furlo to go to *Newcaſtle* for 7 Days; and I found I did not go up without the LORD, for my Soul and thoſe of the People were refreſhed with the Love of GOD. Several of the Soldiers came to hear me preach, and gave great Attention to the Things which were ſpoken. I found great Freedom to ſpeak to the Children, whom GOD has called out of the evil World to ſerve him in this Place. Watch over them, O my GOD, for good, and be Thou their Guide unto Death.

On *Tueſday* my Time was out to go back. I preached at *Painſhee* in the Afternoon to an attentive Congregation, and got to *Sunderland* by 7 at Night. This Week I received a Letter from Mr. *Ch. Weſley*, that the E. of *S.* had aſſured the Lady *H.* that I ſhould be

ſet at Liberty in a few Days. I ſaid, the LORD hath not forgotten to be gracious, for he hath taken my Cauſe in Hand, and it ſhall turn to his Glory, for He alone hath done the Work, when all human Means had ſeemed to fail. My Enemies cried, we have made his Bonds ſtrong, and none can deliver him out of our Snare, for we have put it out of the Officer's Power to diſcharge him for any Price. LORD, I beſeech Thee, open their Eyes, and let them ſee the Snare which Satan hath laid for their Souls, and eſcape by ſpeedy Repentance, and Faith in thy Blood.

This Week I was much out of Health by the Surfeit I got in marching, but found preſent Eaſe by being blooded. The Week following I was ſent for by the Captain to the Store-houſe, and he inſiſted on my going tho' I was ſo ill. When I came there, he and three more Officers came, and aſked me how I did. I told them; and they ſaid here is a good Coat for you, to keep you from cold, that you may recover your Health. I ſaid, I have Coats enough, if that would do; I need none of yours. They ſaid, they would make me wear it, and all the other Cloathing belonging to a Soldier. I anſwered, You may array me as a Man of War, but I ſhall never fight. They aſked, What is your Reaſon? And my Anſwer was, I cannot ſee any thing in this World worth fighting for. I want neither its Riches nor Honours, but the Honour that cometh of GOD only. I regard neither its Smiles nor Frowns; and have no Buſineſs in it but to get well out of it.

Then they ordered the Serjeant to pull off my Coat, and put a red one on me. When he had done it, they turned me round, and rejoiced over me. I ſaid, You ſee the Scripture cannot be broken, where it ſaith, If they do this in the green Tree, what will they do in the dry? What do you mean by that, they aſked? and I anſwer'd, *The Soldiers took* JESUS, *and ſtripped him, and put a Scarlet Robe upon him, and mocked him*, as you have treated me his Servant this Day for ſpeaking his Words. He indeed hath the greater Condemnation, who delivered me into your Hands; but I pray GOD forgive you all. Theſe Words turned their Countenance and Behaviour towards me, and one of them laboured from that time to find ſome Way for me to be ſet at Liberty.

During my three Weeks Illneſs many of the Brethren and Siſters from *Newcaſtle*, *Biddocks*, and *Painſhee* came to ſee me, and GOD was pleaſed at that time to give ſome the Knowledge of Salvation by the Remiſſion of their Sins; and to comfort all our Hearts with his Love. O may we ever keep his Commandments that we may continue in his Love, even as he hath kept his Father's Commandments, and continued in his Love.

On *Friday*, *July* 27. *John Graham* of *Sunderland* came to me with an open Letter in his Hand, and ſaid, Come my Friend, I have good News for thee. GOD hath heard the Prayers of thy People in thy Behalf, and ſent thee Deliverance. Here, read this Letter, which the Major hath ſent to the Captain on thy Account. It was on this wiſe, "I have received an Order from the Earl of *S.* to diſcharge *John Nelſon*, who was preſt from *Birſtal* in the Weſt-riding of *Yorkſhire*. Therefore take his Arms and Cloathing from him which he has received, and let me know if he has had any Pay ſince he came, and ſend him to me with a Furlo." Accordingly I deliver'd all Things I had belonging to them, to Lieutenant *M.* who ſaid he was glad that I was to be releaſed, and wiſhed me well whereſoever I went. I had a Furlo given me, and ſet out in the Afternoon with ſome that were come from *Newcaſtle* to ſee me; and got there by 7.

All the Society gave GOD Thanks on my Behalf, as ſoon as they ſaw me; for they had Knowledge of my Deliverance before me. Next Morning I went to the Major's Quarters about 9. When I had waited about an Hour, I was ordered to come at half an Hour paſt 11; I did ſo, and waited another Hour. Then the Major called to me, and bad me come at half an Hour after two, and he would ſpeak to me. I came again as he ordered me, and when I had ſtayed near an Hour, one of the Captains call'd me, and ſaid, the Major is gone to dine with the Mayor of the Town, and you will hardly ſee him To-night, but you will be ſure to find him To-morrow Morning. I told him that would not do for me, for my Buſineſs was not to be done on the Sabbath.

Near ſix in the Evening, I ſaw the Major go along the Street, and followed him to his Lodgings. He ſaid,

I have an Order from the Lord *S* — to diſcharge you. He ſent for the Adjutant, and ordered him to bring two printed Diſcharges with him. He came and three more of the Officers with him, and filled up the Diſcharge. When he had done, he ſaid, I wiſh all the Men in our Regiment would behave as well as Mr. *Nelſon* has done ſince he came among us, it would be much better for us, and them too. Then our Lieutenant ſaid, Indeed he has done much Good ſince he came among us; for we have not one third of the Curſing and Swearing in the Regiment, which we had before he came. And he has given me ſeveral private Exhortations, and ſome of their Books, and I thank him for them, and his Advice, for it is good. Then the Major ſaid, I wiſh I had a Regiment of ſuch Men as he is in all Reſpects (ſave that one, his refuſing to fight) I would not care what Enemy I had to meet, or where my Lot was caſt.—Sir, if you fear GOD, I ſaid, you have no need to fear any Thing elſe; for they that fear him depart from Evil, and ſeek to do his Will, and not their own. They know that in his Hand are the Iſſues of Life and Death; therefore they fear not him that can kill the Body only, but him that can deſtroy both Soul and Body in Hell. And every one that has this Fear is truly wiſe; but he that dares commit Sin, his Wiſdom is the Fooliſhneſs of Folly; for he is pulling Deſtruction on his own Head, and fitting himſelf for the Fuel of Hell-fire. But he that is wiſe unto Salvation is bold as a Lion, and is more noble than to contend for the Honour which cometh of Men. For having Bread to eat, and Raiment to put on, he knows that is all this World can afford him. He pities the great ones of the Earth, who feed on Husks, and can be content with the empty Title of Right Honourable, while by Sin they debaſe themſelves even down to Hell. But by theſe Things the GOD of this World blinds their Eyes, ſo that very few of them ſee the Way to Heaven, as it is pointed out in the Word of GOD.

Well, ſaid the Major, if you are ſo ſcrupulous about fighting, what muſt we do? I anſwered, it is your Trade, and if you had a better, it might be better for you. But ſomebody, he replied, muſt fight. I ſaid,

if all Men lived by Faith in the Son of GOD, Wars would be at an End. That is true, he anſwered, if it was ſo, we ſhould learn War no more.

But there is one Thing I deſire to know of you; tell me, do you make your Sermons ready before you go to preach, or do you ſpeak off hand? "I do not ſtudy what to ſay, but ſpeak as the Spirit of GOD enables me. Well, ſaid he, I cannot tell what you mean by the Spirit of GOD. The more is the Pity, I anſwered, that you ſhould live ſo long in the World, and know nothing of GOD yet. For we do not know GOD, but by his own Spirit given unto us; and till we have received that Spirit, we are without GOD in the World. And no Man can have this Gift and not know it; for thus ſaith the LORD JESUS, *At that Day ye ſhall know that I am in my Father, and you in me and I in you.* So if GOD be true, we muſt know that CHRIST is in us, or we are none of his. For as many as are led by the Spirit of GOD, they are the Sons of GOD. But if any Man have not the Spirit of CHRIST, he is none of his. He is no Chriſtian, no more than a *Turk* or a *Pagan* is, unleſs he has the ſame Spirit which raiſed CHRIST from the Dead, to raiſe him in this World from the Death of Sin.

Here one of the Captains ſpoke, "You ſaid one Day, if we have not the Spirit of GOD, we are dead while we live. Did I ſo? *Yes you did.* Then I will prove it; both from the Doctrine of the Church of *England* (of which I profeſs myſelf a Member) and from the Word of GOD. GOD gave me to ſpeak plainly from both for about twenty Minutes; none contradicted me, but they ſtood as dumb Men.

Then the Major ſaid, Here is ſuch a Diſcharge for you, as I never gave before, but once, and put it into my Hand. I told them, I have now delivered my own Soul, and am pure from the Blood of you all, for I have not ſpared either poor or rich, ſince I came among you, but have ſet Life and Death before you all, as you came in my Way. I have delivered unto you, that the Wicked ſhall be turned into Hell, and all the People that forget GOD; and contrariwiſe, the bleſſed State of them, that repent, and obey the Goſpel

Goſpel of CHRIST our Saviour. And I pray GOD give you all to underſtand the Things which make for your everlaſting Peace, and bleſs you in turning every one of you from your Iniquities. Then ſhall we meet another Day to part no more. The Major ſaid, I wiſh you well wherever you go: for I believe you *Methodiſts* are well-meaning People; and ſo ſaid they all. I gave them a Book, and took my Leave of them.

I went to the Room, and preached that Night and had ſeveral of the Soldiers to hear me, who gave great Attention to what I ſaid. Then I took my Leave of them, and ſome of them wept, and deſired me to pray for them, and ſaid, We are glad you are ſet at Liberty, but ſorry to part with you. I commended them to GOD, and to the Word of his Grace, and truſt they will mind the Exhortation, and become good Soldiers of *Jeſus Chriſt*.

On this 28th Day of *July*, I was ſet at Liberty to go whereſoever I thought was moſt to GOD's Glory, who has delivered me from my Bonds. For He hath done the Work, and to him the Glory is due. What am I that he ſhould ſo care for me! But he is a GOD that heareth the Prayer; and the Cries of his People inclined him to take my Cauſe in Hand. Praiſe the LORD, O my Soul, who hath kept thee in all Trials, and hath not ſuffered thee to faint in ſore Temptation.

Now I find the Words true which Mr. *J. Weſley* firſt ſent me at *York*. "Well, my Brother, is the GOD whom you ſerve able to deliver you, and do you find him faithful to his Word? Is his Grace ſtill ſufficient for you? I doubt it not, he will not ſuffer you to be weary or faint in your Mind. But he had a Work for you to do, which you knew not of, and thus his Counſel was to be fulfilled! O loſe no Time! Who knows how many Souls GOD may by this Means deliver into your Hands. Shall not all theſe Things be for the Furtherance of the Goſpel? And is not the Time coming when we ſhall cry out together; "Nay, in all theſe Things we are more than Conquerors thro' him that loved us!"

2 JY 58

FINIS.